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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 0691
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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR AUGUST 03, 2006

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for August 03, 2006. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

BOLGE: Eric Green, the new U.S. Consul in Adana, paid a visit to the Mayor of Adana to introduce himself. Mr. Green apologized for his visit being delayed because of the evacuation process of the U.S. citizens and families from Lebanon. Mr. Green extended deepest thanks to the mayor in response to Adana's help during the humanitarian process which "reinforced friendship between Turkey and the U.S."

BOLGE / EVRENSEL: The dailies point out the continuing military deployments of Turkey in the border area, and report at the same time the ongoing meetings between Turkey, U.S. and Iraq on how to dissolve the PKK in northern Iraq. Bolge daily notes that the so-called flag of the PKK and KDP (Kurdistan Democratic Party) were still on a mast side by side in Kirkuk.

CUMHURIYET / RADIKAL / EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM / SABAH: The dailies report that Necirvan Barzani, head of the regional authority in northern Iraq, allegedly cautioned Murat Karayilan, a senior PKK leader, during a meeting in Arbil last week, not to use his territory as a base for assaults against Turkey. Sabah daily reports that, when Karayilan responded negatively, Barzani closed all PKK offices in the region. Sabah and Ozgur Gundem dailies cite State Department Spokesperson McCormack as saying that everybody was working to resolve the issue about PKK's presence in the northern Iraq in order to prevent a possible Turkish incursion there.

HURRIYET: The daily reports the allegations that Karayilan would be handed over to Turkey. Kurdistan Democratic Party's (KDP) official reportedly came to Turkey to discuss that issue. However, Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman dismissed such allegations and said that KDP official were paying visits to Turkey for other reasons.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Yesterday morning numerous military units and vehicles were transferred via Sirnak's Cizre district to the border area. New tanks have also reportedly been deployed in the Cizre's Tank Battalion.

EVRENSEL / RADIKAL: Explosive placed on a railroad in Erzincan's Ilici district has been detonated as a cargo train was passing. Material damage has been reported on one of the cars.

SABAH: Five PKK terrorists have surrendered to the security officers with their arms in Sirnak on August 1, announced Sirnak Governor's Office.

HURRIYET: Van Prosecutor Sezgin Kanmaz appealed the court verdict concerning the Semdinli case in favor of the defendants. Two non-commissioned officers were sentenced to 39 years in prison (see press summary 06/21). The prosecutor claimed that the investigation process was incomplete and defendants did not satisfactorily have an opportunity to defend themselves.

EVRENSEL / OZGUR GUNDEM: Members of the Initiative for Hasankeyf's Survival requested an appointment with PM Erdogan ahead of the August 5 ground breaking ceremony of the Ilisu Dam Project which will submerge historic Hasankeyf (in Batman) under dam waters. Meanwhile, a tent will be set up in Hasankeyf and people against the dam project will be on duty all through the night tomorrow.

OZGUR GUNDEM: The daily dubbed it "a suicide in the name of honor" when a young man in Diyarbakir shot himself in the forehead when his wife gave birth to a child two months after their religious marriage. (Note: Religious marriage is a phenomenon not legally recognized in Turkey, but it is a common practice in many parts of the country. End Note.)

OZGUR GUNDEM: A court of first instance ordered a 15,000 YTL fine on a local weekly newspaper called Araratin Sesi (Voice of Ararat) in Agri's Dogubeyazit district for two separate reports, namely, one about the anniversary of PKK's foundation and the other about a signature campaign in support for Abdullah Ocalan.

REID